



Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 2

aud 23.402

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[American Record Guide](#) (Gerald Fox - 01.07.2001)

This 1982 concert performance is not to be confused with Kubelik's 1969 studio recording with the same orchestra, chorus, and soprano.

The interpretations are quite similar. Both stick closely to the score, though in both versions, Kubelik ignores many of Mahler's detailed notations: caesuras in I, long-held horn notes in V, etc. The only significant changes in tempo are in I, III, and V. The 1982 I is about a minute longer than the 1969; the 1982 III is about 1:20 longer, and the 1982 V is about two minutes longer. The total for 1969 is 76:18, for 1982 80:00. Both are well played and rather straightforward and earnest rather than exciting.

Soprano Edith Mathis is excellent in the 1969, and a shade less so in the 1982. Both contraltos are excellent, with Norma Procter more angelic (1969) and Fassbaender more ardent. In 1969 Kubelik has the basses slow down somewhat and then accelerate in the fourth measure of I. He does not repeat that sin in 1982. The bells at the end of the symphony are reasonably audible in 1982, but next to inaudible in 1969. Sonics in both are good; the 1969 crisper and brighter, the 1982 warmer, with better low frequencies. There is a production slip in this one: Mahler wanted III, IV, and V played without pause. That is impossible here, because III is on one disc and IV and V on the other. The timings are such that III, IV, and V could have been accommodated on one disc.

If you have the 1969 recording, I do not think you need to acquire the 1982. If you like Kubelik's way with Mahler and do not have his Second, the 1969 seems to be deleted.